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STATE FOR SCA/FO GASTRIGHT, SCA/A  
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OSD FOR SHIVERS  
CENTCOM FOR CG CJTF-82, POLAD

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [EAIDAF](#) [ECON](#) [MARR](#) [AF](#)  
SUBJECT: PRT SHARANA: PAKTIKA ASSESSMENT 2006

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SUMMARY  
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¶1. (SBU) In the past twelve months, measurable progress in Paktika has been limited, although 2006 witnessed greater Afghan involvement in the province's security. The most positive changes were driven by the U.S. military and the PRT in Sharana. Paktika is a province that has never experienced effective central government control. Since the fall of the Taliban, the U.S. military has been the single largest force for change in Paktika. The Afghan government and security forces in the province remain weak and for the most part ineffective. END SUMMARY

SECURITY  
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¶2. (SBU) 2006 witnessed greater Afghan involvement in the province's security. With U.S. military assistance, Afghans now operate a Joint Provincial Coordination Center (JPCC) which coordinates the activities of all Afghan security forces in the province. There are 839 Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) authorized in Paktika. However, only 455 professional (trained) police were actually on hand in 2005 and 2006. In 2006, Paktika hired an additional 294 non-professional temporary contract police. Paid by the Governor's operational funds, the contract police wear the national police uniform, provide a national presence in remote districts, and perform the normal police functions of the AUP, although none have been trained at the Regional Training Center. The AUP recently began joint patrols with the PRT's MP platoon and have, in the last few months, successfully defended themselves when attacked in the districts. However, the AUP was not an effective security force in 2005 and they remained ineffective at the end of 2006. Afghan Border Police (ABP) numbers remained generally static with 992 authorized and approximately 479 on hand in both 2005 and 2006. The ABP in Paktika lack sufficient personnel, NCOs, equipment and infrastructure, but mostly they lack professional and honest leaders. They will not significantly improve as an effective force in Paktika until their leadership sets a more professional example.

13. (SBU) In the JPCC, the Afghans maintain a presence, but they are not as effective as they could be due to failure to fully staff it. The leadership tends to be ineffective and does not provide enough support for the JPCC which is not staffed with the best personnel in the security forces. Moreover, they are not fully manned. However, they do understand reporting requirements and there is good cross talk among staff of different security elements. To become more effective, Afghan security forces need to commit to fully staff all personnel requirements, be willing to organize under the command of the AUP Chief of Operations in the JPCC, and work for the Officer in Charge regardless of service affiliation. This will only be accomplished through continued engagement, coaching, and training.

14. (SBU) Afghan National Army (ANA) numbers increased in Paktika in 2006 from two Kandaks (battalions) with approximately 1200 soldiers to four Kandaks with roughly 2200 soldiers. Unfortunately, many ANA will only leave their secure bases if paid an additional two U.S. dollars a day to go outside the wire. Despite these problems, the ANA is by far the best Afghan security force in the province and is continuing to improve under U.S. and Romanian Embedded Training Team (ETT) guidance.

#### INSURGENT ACTIVITY

15. (SBU) Insurgent activity in Paktika increased in 2006. In the period May through December, indirect fire attacks increased from 95 in 2005 to 148 in 2006. Direct fire attacks, tracked over the same time period, increased from 54 to 118, with improvised explosive device strikes increasing

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from 26 to 67. The first suicide bombing in Paktika occurred on April 9 (there were none in 2005) with a vehicle born suicide attack in Bermel district. They continued through December, with a total of four vehicle and five body-borne suicide bombings. Many of these security incidents occurred in the border districts and are tied more to cross border activity. With the exception of the border districts, insurgent attacks in Paktika saw no significant increase in 2006 over 2005. Attacks did, however, impact the provincial government. Paktika's Directors of Health and Refugees and the District Commissioner of Shakalabad as well as the Chief of Police of Gayan district were all assassinated in 2006.

#### GOVERNANCE

16. (SBU) During 2006, Paktika's Governor Khpalwak attempted to reach out to the tribes and religious leaders and made a conscious effort to travel to each district. However, he does not have a strong staff or a good relationship with other members of the provincial government and is to a great extent a one-man government. Paktika's Provincial Council continued to struggle in 2006. Meeting haphazardly, and regularly ignored by the Governor, the Provincial Council at present is not an effective representative body. The three Meshrano Jirga members and four Wolsei Jirga members who represent Paktika in the national Parliament are rarely seen in the province. Parliamentarians and Provincial Council members are simply not a factor in day to day life and have made little effort to connect with their constituents. Little progress was made in developing Paktika's Directors of Ministries during 2006. UNAMA rarely visits the province and there is no NGO or Afghan government-sponsored governance training. Only 16 of the 25 ministries are represented in Paktika.

#### REAL POLITICAL POWER IN PAKTIKA ) THE TRIBES

17. (SBU) In Paktika's districts, tribal and religious structures provide the only functioning government and

judicial systems. Afghan government representatives in the districts are more symbolic faces than ruling entities. (Comment: Effective authority can only come about when local tribal and religious leaders work together with trained, well resourced local district and provincial administrators who are able to convince the traditional leaders that they bring something of value to complement or replace the tribal and religious systems. End Comment) Corruption and the pervading suspicion of corruption in the national and provincial governments are the single largest factor separating the people from the government in Paktika.

#### ECONOMIC SITUATION

18. (SBU) Paktika's economy is pre-industrial farming and pastoral. Its predominately subsistence economy saw little economic growth or change in 2006. Over 90 percent of the people of Paktika are subsistence farmers or nomadic herders. There was little or no change in their economic situation in 2006, with the exception of a 50 percent reduction in cereal/grain crops due to a severe drought. There is no industry or manufacturing in Paktika. The largest employers in Paktika are the Afghan government and the U.S. military. However, there has been some limited economic growth in service industries along the roads built with U.S. assistance.

#### SOCIETAL

19. (SBU) Paktika has limited exposure to the world outside. Traditional religious and tribal (Pashtun Wali) customs hold sway. No noticeable change in the social order was seen in Paktika for some time. Women are rarely seen, and when outside the family compound, are nearly always covered head

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to toe in burkas. Few schools for girls currently exist but increased threats to both schools and parents caused at least one school to close in western Paktika. However, in 2006, nearly all Paktika's District Tribal Shuras went on record requesting the government build schools for both boys and girls in their districts.

#### COMMENT

110. (SBU) In Paktika, government inaction, inefficiency, and corruption are the biggest threats to the Karzai Government. The failure of the government to reach out to tribal and religious leaders and the people in the districts is a weakness that needs to be addressed before effective governance can take place. Until Afghan government leaders take responsibility and reach out to the people in the districts, the Afghan government will remain ineffective in Paktika.  
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